

Commonwealth of Massachusetts



Emergency Assistance Program

Fiscal Year 2014, Fourth Quarterly Report

Department of Housing and Community Development

July 31, 2014



Department of Housing and Community Development
EA Legislative Report
Quarter 4, SFY 2014

During Quarter 4, 3,002 families applied for EA, an 8 percent increase from the previous quarter but almost equal to the number who applied the previous year. (3,008 families applied during the FY13, Quarter 4.) Consistent with demand for EA as reflected in the number of families applying, 1,579 families were placed in EA shelters or hotels/motels during Quarter 4, 18 percent more than the previous quarter and 46% more than Quarter 4 of FY13. In addition, 89 EA eligible families were diverted from shelter with HomeBASE Household Assistance, a flexible benefit to help them retain their current housing or support them in seeking alternative housing.

The Boston regional office continued to serve as the entry point for the greatest number of families placed in shelter or hotels/motels, 469 families in Quarter 4, accounting for 30 percent of all placements, followed by the Springfield office at 13 percent and the Brockton office at 11 percent.

Forty-nine percent of families entering EA shelter and hotels/motels were eligible due to a health and safety risk, while domestic violence was the reason for homelessness for 14 percent of families and eviction for another 13 percent. Of those families experiencing a health and safety risk, 63% qualified for EA because they were in irregular housing situations. 19 percent were experiencing health and safety problems related to their hosts' behavior (violent conduct, substance abuse, or mental illness), and another 18 percent were living in situations unfit for human habitation.

During Quarter 4, HomeBASE Rental Assistance (HBRA) expired for approximately 1,010 families (19% of families whose HBRA benefits expired during FY14). 88 families, 9% of the families whose HBRA benefit ended during Quarter 4, received a shelter or hotel/motel placement and entered the system. Families ending HBRA at the end of the quarter may have applied for and entered EA in subsequent months. At time of reporting, only 13 percent of families whose HBRA benefit expired during FY14 had entered an EA shelter or hotel/motel.

To accommodate demand for EA beyond DHCD's contracted shelter units, the Department continued to rely on hotels/motels. During Quarter 4, there was a daily average caseload of 1,905 families in hotels/motels compared to 2,016 in Quarter 3, a 6 percent decrease. The fourth quarter began with 1,921 families in hotels/motels and increased three percent to 1,973 families by the end quarter. Due to the continuing demand for EA, DHCD continued contracting for additional shelter units. During Quarter 4, DHCD added 63 new shelter units. In FY14, 707 new shelter units were added, expanding shelter capacity beyond the 2,023 contracted shelter units at the start of the fiscal year.

During Quarter 4, 1,516 families exited the EA system. 231 (15%) of these families left with an MRVP voucher. 538 families (35% of Quarter 4 exits) left the EA shelter or hotel/motels with HomeBASE Household Assistance.¹

¹ The numbers receiving MRVPs and HomeBASE Household Assistance are not mutually exclusive. Families receiving an MRVP may also exit with HomeBASE Household Assistance.

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EA Applications and Entries

All Applications	SFY 2014 Quarter 4	Previous Quarter	SFY 2014			SFY 2014 YTD
			Apr	May	Jun	
Families Applying to EA	3,002	2,787	971	1,075	1,019	11,595
Families Entering Shelter and Hotel/Motels or Diverted with HomeBASE Household Assistance	1,668	1,443	520	585	563	6,562
Families Entering Shelter & Hotels/Motels	1,579	1,341	485	566	528	6,167
% Entering Shelter or Hotels/Motels	95%	93%	93%	97%	94%	94%
Families Diverted with HomeBASE HA	89	102	35	19	35	395
% Entering HomeBASE	5%	7%	7%	3%	6%	6%

Note: Families applying for EA are an unduplicated count. Since families may apply multiple times, the sum of monthly data do not equal the quarterly total.

Sources: DHCD Placement Unit Daily Entry Data and Tracker.

EA Health & Safety Assessments

	SFY 2014 Quarter 4	Previous Quarter	SFY 2014			SFY 2014
			Apr	May	Jun	
H&S Assessments Conducted by DCF	763	674	242	242	279	2,775
Families Determined at Risk	660	597	207	225	228	2,369
% Referrals at Risk	87%	89%	86%	93%	82%	85%
Shelter Diversions	103	77	35	17	51	406
% Referrals Diverted	13%	11%	14%	7%	18%	15%

Source: DCF Monthly Homeless H&S Assessment Reports.

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EA Shelter Entries by Region

Regional Office	SFY 2014 Quarter4		Previous Quarter	SFY 2014			SFY 2014	
	# Families	% of Total		Apr	May	Jun	# Families	% of Total
All Offices	1,579	100%	1,341	485	566	528	6,167	100%
Boston	469	30%	389	136	164	169	1,741	28%
Brockton	172	11%	179	57	66	49	734	12%
Fall River	48	3%	32	13	13	22	140	2%
Fitchburg	15	1%	7	6	5	4	34	1%
Framingham	35	2%	23	10	13	12	90	1%
Greenfield	18	1%	8	4	7	7	62	1%
Holyoke	71	4%	76	21	27	23	324	5%
Hyannis	19	1%	11	3	8	8	64	1%
Lawrence	63	4%	63	20	29	14	292	5%
Lowell	85	5%	64	25	32	28	309	5%
Malden	68	4%	92	26	19	23	347	6%
New Bedford	39	2%	28	18	10	11	118	2%
North Shore (Salem)	80	5%	69	30	23	27	338	5%
Pittsfield/North Adams	3	< 1%	3	1	1	1	13	< 1%
Plymouth	9	1%	7	3	2	4	44	1%
Revere/Chelsea	83	5%	54	26	30	27	331	5%
Southbridge	5	< 1%	3	3	2	0	20	< 1%
Springfield	198	13%	147	53	81	64	812	13%
Taunton	38	2%	19	10	14	14	138	2%
Worcester	61	4%	67	20	20	21	216	4%

Source: DHCD Placement Unit Daily Entry Data.

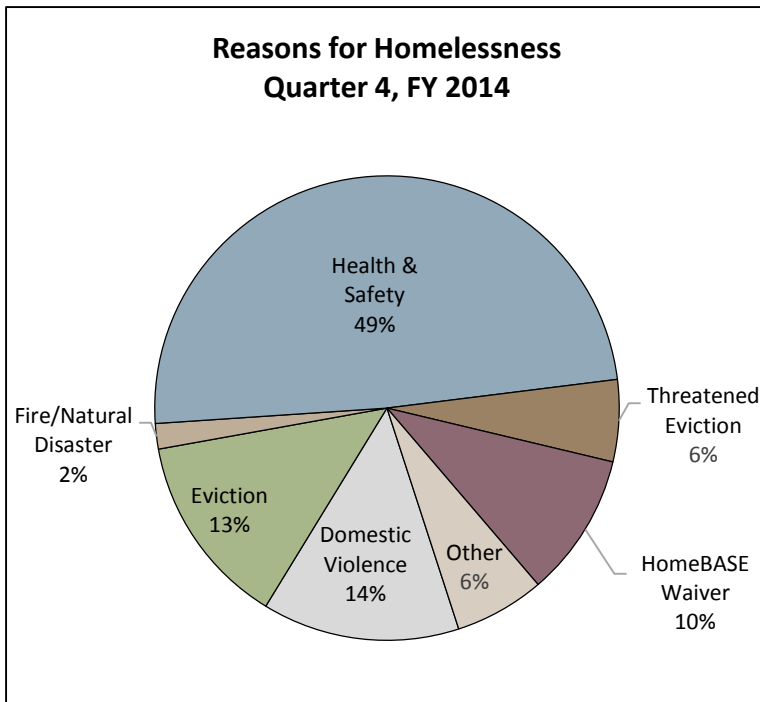
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**Reason for Homelessness,
Families Entering Shelter/Motels**

Reason for Homelessness	SFY 2014 Quarter 4		Previous Quarter	SFY 2014			SFY 2014	
	# Families	% of Total		Apr	May	Jun	# Families	% of Total
Total	1,579	100%	1,341	485	566	528	6,167	100%
Domestic Violence	217	14%	170	68	68	81	760	12%
Eviction	212	13%	231	54	87	71	872	14%
Fire/Natural Disaster	28	2%	26	9	7	12	79	1%
Health & Safety	775	49%	669	254	274	247	3,165	51%
Threatened Eviction	90	6%	57	21	41	28	291	5%
HomeBASE Waiver	158	10%	94	43	58	57	662	11%
Other	99	6%	94	36	31	32	338	5%

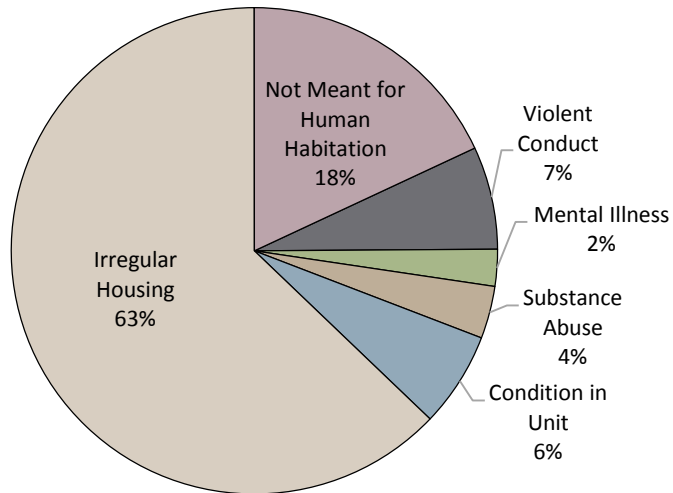
Note: Data includes families placed in an EA shelters or hotels/motels who declined their placements.

Source: DHCD Placement Unit data.



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**Health & Safety Reasons
Quarter 4, FY 2014**



Shelter Exits

	SFY 2014 Quarter 4		Previous Quarter	SFY 2014			SFY 2014 YTD	
	# Families	% of Total		Apr	May	Jun	# Families	% of Total
Total Shelter & Hotel/Motel Exits	1,516	100%	1,528	505	530	481	5,518	100%
Exiting with HomeBASE HA	538	35%	575	210	159	169	2,023	37%
Exiting with MRVPs	231	15%	503	110	76	45	885	16%

Note: Some families exiting with an MRVP also exited with HomeBASE Household Assistance.

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EA Shelter and Hotel/Motel Caseload

Daily Utilization by Shelter Type	Quarter 4, SFY 2014	
	# of Families	% of Total Daily Caseload
Shelter	2,656	58%
Hotels/Motels	1,905	42%
All Families	4,561	100%
Caseload Difference from Previous Quarter	128	
% Change from Previous Quarter	2.9%	

Note: Number of families indicates the average daily number during the quarter.

**Length of Stay and Cost of Families Exiting EA
During Quarter 4**

	Min.	Max.	Average
Days in EA Shelter or Hotels/Motels	0	1,365	227
Cost Per Episode	\$108	\$147,420	\$24,516

Notes:

Cost per episode assumes an average daily rate of \$108 (the weighted average of the shelter and hotel/motel rates). The average daily rate includes additional costs incurred through housing stabilization and services coordination provided to families in EA. It is possible to have a length of stay of zero days with associated costs if a family is approved for EA and placed in a shelter or hotel/motel but abandons their placement.

HomeBASE Caseload

Type of Assistance	Number of Families
Rental Assistance	0
Household Assistance	5,538

Note: Data indicate families active in the HomeBASE program on 7/1/2014.